CHARLES THOMPSON: My name is Charles Thompson. I'm an instructor of physics and astrophysics in Charleston, South Carolina. I'm not here to do any moral discussions or to try to pontificate. I'm here for some brutal reality discussions.

I have also worked at the Los Alamos linear accelerator. I have worked at Fermi Lab in the superconducting area and, also, been a member of the U.S. Army and NASA. I will go ahead and start with the Army, because that sets me up for your transportation stuff.

Like many other Vietnam era veterans, I got hit with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. It's a cancer. What happens is that you walk into the doctor's office, and they offer you three or four different types of cancer therapy. The real world is, though, all of them have risk.

So this plan has risk. Those are -- get ready to not nod anymore -- we live in a world where there is nothing that is without risk. Your mayor said they can't tell me it's totally safe. No one can tell you it's totally safe.

I'm going to talk to you about brutal reality. Your Yucca Mountain may have, hopefully will have nuclear high level stuff stored there. But right now at the Savannah River plant, there are several thousand tons of the stuff stored.

Yucca Mountain is on a fault line. Savannah

River is on a fault line that makes that one look like a piece of junk. It's an extension of the so called new Madrid fault. The last one moved the entire course of the Mississippi River when it went back in 1850.

We're due by the way. It's right next door to the Savannah River, which leads directly into the Gulf Stream. You think the buffet at the Rio costs a lot now? If that thing breaks, if the Savannah River site breaks, we're not going to be able to fish in the whole Atlantic Ocean, and we're going to have to spend trillions to indemnify the European nations.

There is no place without risk, but we can try to minimize the risk like a cancer patient. So what I'm telling you is that we can buy with Yucca Mountain about 100,000 years of reasonable, admittedly not 100 percent riskless, but relatively low risk.

We leave that stuff in Savannah River site and 134 other sites around this nation, and we're going to have a lot of trouble. There are places in Washington State right now where we can't move it. Savannah River site is about to have some more of that happen.

So I'm giving you an outside view. You see what's happening here. You know, you don't like it. And if you think that this is just, oh, wow, whatever, let me talk to you about a real world thing. One lady up here showed the ports where the nuclear material comes in.

Let me tell you about an egregious situation. Japan reloaded a reactor. They shipped the high-level

waste to the U.S. Why are we taking it? Because a very smart man, several smart man in the Eisenhower realized, even though we didn't know Iran was going to be a rogue nation, they realized that this nuclear stuff could be turned into weapons. If you could get a couple hundred tons of it, you can get a few hundred pounds of it.

Isn't is there some guy in Iran right now that's about three thousand centrifuges? We need to bring the stuff back. I don't like it any more than you. By the way, we're getting it from Venezuela, France, Japan, all other places. Japan shipped that stuff to the United States.

San Diego, Charleston, South Carolina, both nuclear capable ports. It didn't go to San Diego. Why? Because they have 54 votes and we have eight. How many votes do you have here? What's going to happen when Savannah River pops? You can either cut your deal now and get the best research situation you can and to make sure you're looking at it like Idaho did.

Idaho cut a deal. They made sure that the governor of Idaho put all the people who were watching the site into place. My recommendation to you is you think very, very seriously about the comparative risk of doing nothing versus the risk of otherwise.

Then I also loved one of your politicians making the comment about how they will be eventually moving waste. Ladies and gentlemen, they're moving the waste right now, whether they do or don't have the

ability to react to it. So talking about we need more time to prepare for the moving of nuclear waste, I don't think so.

And I am a card carrying nuclear physicist, and I'm telling you right now nobody is going to chemically get rid of radiation. It's in the nucleus. That's why they call it nuclear. And to do that you need to have a facility like Los Alamos to do the work.

And I still can't believe Governor Richardson of New Mexico is suggesting that Yucca Mountain be turned into a research facility. There's no way I would work underground on a linear accelerator 90 miles from civilization, because most of the kids -- I'm 60 now. Most of the kids that do this work are graduate students or in their 20s to 40s, and they're not going to come to Yucca Mountain to do research when they can go to New Mexico.

Besides, what government in its right mind sends jobs out of his state to somewhere else? Anyway, the East Coast version, I don't have good news for you. But I do tell you that comparing the risk for a cancer survivor is something you should think very seriously about. Thank you.